

# OATMEAL

NUMBER 8







# OATMEAL NO. 8

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one

life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded," said EMERSON, but he didn't know the half of it: before you can succeed you must endure. So: Eat lots of fruit, cover your mouth when you sneeze; practice kind acts of randomness and beautiful acts of senselessness if you can; ask for directions but don't follow them too closely - the world likes a loose fitting interpretation; nap if you have to; stop driving so much; never decline a back rub, ice cream, or a kiss; learn where you came from; brush your teeth; tell jokes, especially bad ones, with glee; sing old songs; seek out old friends, and, at all costs, avoid e-mail. "I still think of you, Jim Henson" is copyright 1993 Chris Aubry, who kindly let me reprint it in these pages. Chris currently produces an 8 page magazine size comic "Clayton Stiles" which is \$1.50 ppd from Chris at: 1128 W. MADISON, OTTAWA IL 61350. Ernie, Bert, Kermit © 1994 Jim Henson Productions. The rest of this zine is © 1994 Timothy Ereneta. Attention: Fifty cents and a kind word will get you this or any back issue, and a four issue subscription is \$2.00. Write to me at the address below and I'll write back. I love to trade zines. Not to be used as a life preserver. OATMEAL is published four times a year on recycled paper, though I'm looking at hemp and/or kenaf as alternatives. This issue was made possible through the generous donations of: RANDALL! ROSELYN! BRIAN & DANA! HANNAH! DAVID & CHRISTIE!

OATMEAL • TIM ERENETA • 40 MOSS AVE APT 204 • OAKLAND CA  
94610-1301



# OATMEAL

PRESENTS

## BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE!



Issue Number One!  
Tim introduces us to Fabulous and funky OAKTOWN!



Journey inside Tim's head in OATMEAL No. 2. Also: the evils of CONSUMERISM! AND LOTS OF STRIPES FROM FAMOUS CARTONISTS!!!!



Number 3: the BROKEN HEART issue. CLASSIC self-pity Tim shows us his cool job. Includes AWESOME recipe!



TURTLES. LOTS OF TURTLES. Issue #4: TURTLES. Did I mention the turtles?



What's WRONG with that?



OATMEAL NO. 5? INCOMPREHENSIBLE. ECLECTIC MUSICAL REFERENCES. AT LEAST I'M IN IT.



ISSUE 6: TIM'S STUFF, Alpha betized. Don't ask why.



DON'T FORGET NO. 7 - VULTURES! URBAN RAIL! TIM'S LOVE LIFE!



PREDICTIONS! WHAT WILL THE NEXT ISSUE FOCUS ON?







Those who say that there is no fall season here in California (except for the new crop of television shows) are sadly out-of-touch with their environs. It's a matter of light:

The day becomes more solemn and serene  
When noon is past - there is a harmony

In autumn, and a luster in its sky,  
Which through the summer is not heard or seen,

As if it could not be, as if it had, \* not been.

Asian pears and winter squash  
decorate the farmer's market,  
along with the last crops of tomatoes  
and red peppers. Winds have a chill,

carry a hint of wood smoke, whip up memories of going to school.  
There's a tug, an urge to migrate, to hibernate, to visit old friends and sacred spaces, to seek comfort and draw a last breath before the long dark crisis of winter arrives.

Time to rethink your priorities:  
Money, career, school, relationship.  
Fear is back in season, I notice,  
as friends wrestle with angels  
and spiders hang their delicate  
and terrible webs just inches  
from my door.

It's fall. I can tell.

Besides, my street is lined with  
deciduous sycamores. One by one  
they turn their leaves from green, to  
yellow, to orange, to scarlet and wine.  
Look around. Shiver. Fall.



\* OATMEAL CONTEST: Name the poet, win a prize!

## MY STORY SO FAR...

Moss Manor is too  
quiet - so I bring  
home three dozen  
new roommates.

Then I notice they  
chew with their  
mouths open. But  
I don't say anything.

CRUNCH  
CRUNCH  
CRUNCH



but one of them  
lets it slip that  
they're not bike  
messengers at all,  
but ACTORS.  
I say something.

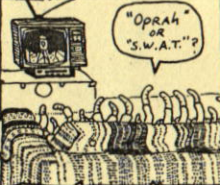
OUT!



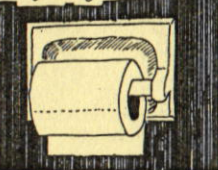
I'm not sure what  
gender these folks  
are - or even what  
species (I suspect  
*Eisenia foetida*) -  
but I'm not one to pry.



They claim to all be  
bike messengers -  
but they rarely  
leave the house.



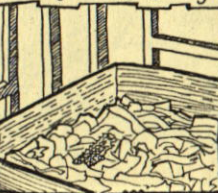
One day I find the  
toilet paper hanging  
from the back of the  
roll. I don't say  
anything.



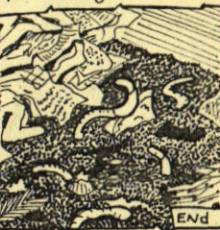
And when they  
mock my collection  
of Bing Crosby LPs,  
I cringe, but I don't  
say anything....



They relocate to  
a box full of damp  
shredded newspaper  
on the patio, into  
which I toss vegetable  
peelings + used tea bags.



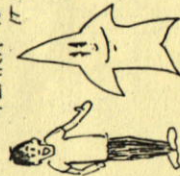
They love it - And  
why shouldn't they?  
It's a step up  
from being an actor.



END



THIS SUMMER, AT CAMP,  
MY KIDS TAUGHT ME A SONG,  
TO THE TUNE OF "JOHN BROWN'S  
BODY." I'VE ASKED  
TZARA TO SING  
IT FOR US.



♪ I KNOW A SONG  
THAT GETS ON EVERYBODY'S  
NERVES!...



\* AKA "BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC"

♪ I KNOW A  
SONG THAT  
GETS ON  
EVERYBODY'S  
NERVES!



♪...AND IT GETS ON  
EVERYBODY'S NERVES!



"I'LL BE  
HERE ALL  
WEEK"

FOUR '94

SOMETIMES YOUR TRAIL  
BUDDIES WILL NEED  
YOUR ENTHUSIASM....

COME ON, KIDS! WE'RE  
ALMOST THERE!  
REPEAT AFTER ME:

I'M A LEAN—  
**MEAN—**  
HIKING MACHINE!

SIGN— I'M A LEAN—  
**MEAN—**

IT'S ALMOST  
AS IF HE  
WANTS US  
TO PUT  
SPIDERS IN HIS  
SLEEPING  
BAG...

HE TRIES  
THIS AGAIN  
AND I'M  
FAKING  
HEAT  
STROKE

AND BE SURE TO BRING  
A DECENT MAP!



OKAY, FOLKS,  
KEEP AN EYE  
OUT FOR THE  
WATERFALL...

DO THEY PAY  
YOU FOR THIS?

AND  
KNOW  
PROPER  
FIRST  
AID....



WE'LL HAVE  
THAT SCRAPE  
CLEAN IN  
NO TIME...

ISN'T THAT  
TANG?

SO WHY DID I PUT MYSELF THROUGH  
THIS? ONE REASON: SUCH A RIGOROUS  
INTRODUCTION TO BACKPACKING  
WAS PREPARATION FOR A WEEK  
CAMPING WITH MY BELOVED,  
DEIRDRE, WHO HAS NOT ONLY GONE  
THROUGH OUTWARD BOUND'S WILDERNESS  
PROGRAM BUT CLIMBED MT. RAINIER  
TWICE THIS SUMMER —



ISN'T THE SIGHT  
OF THE MOON  
RISING OVER THE  
FALLS WORTH THE  
7 MILES WE HAD  
TO HIKE?

Z.



# WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER VACATION

OR  
"THE ESSENTIALS OF BACKPACKING"

IF YOU'RE A FIRST-TIME BACKPACKER LIKE ME, BE SURE TO BRING ALONG ABOUT A DOZEN OR SO 6TH, 7TH & 8TH GRADE KIDS.



BRING LOTS OF TRAIL MIX, FROOT LOOPS, HOT CHOCOLATE, AND INSTANT NOODLES TO KEEP THEM HAPPY - BUT SAVE THE GAZPACHO, COUSCOUS, AND TIRAMISU FOR YOURSELF.

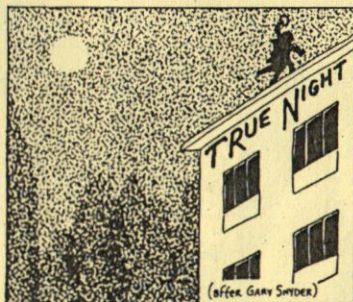


VERY IMPORTANT! TIE YOUR SHOES!



YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY

3 CANS OF MOSQUITO REPELLANT, 4 POUNDS OF RAISIN BRAN, 7 PAIR OF UNDERWEAR, A DEERBONE, ESPRESSO MAKER, FLARE GUN, ANT FARM, COMIC BOOKS, VIEWMASTER, TEDDY BEAR, AND A SANDAL - BUT TRY CONVINCING A 12-YEAR OLD FIRST-TIME CAMPER OF THAT....



(OFFER GARY SMYDER)



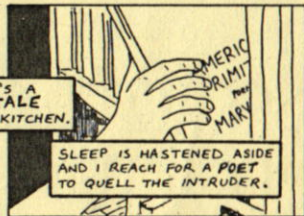
I INSIDE MY DOMESTIC ABBEY, UNDER COVER OF DOWN AND NIGHT



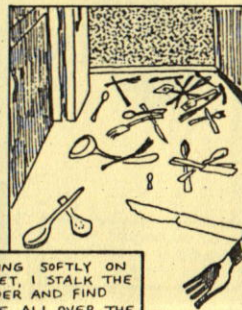
I AWAKE TO A CLATTER

AND I REALIZE OH NO

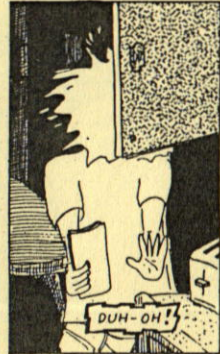
THERE'S A FOLKTALE IN THE KITCHEN.



SLEEP IS HASTENED ASIDE AND I REACH FOR A POET TO QUELL THE INTRUDER.

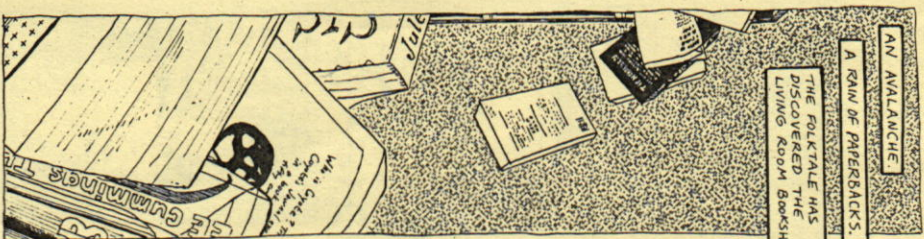


T RODDING SOFTLY ON CARPET, I STALK THE INVADER AND FIND SILVERWARE ALL OVER THE FLOOR. I BUMP MY HEAD INTO A CABINET.



DUH-OH!

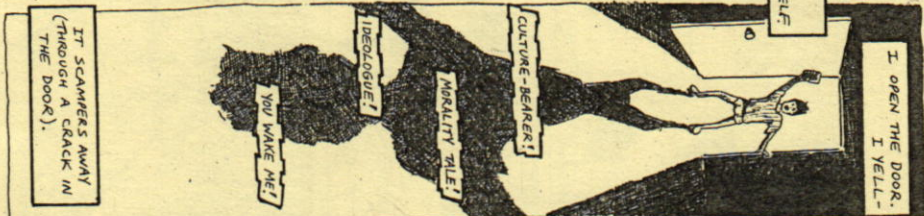




AN AVALANCHE.

A RAIN OF PAPERBACKS.

THE FOLKTALE HAS  
DISCOVERED THE  
LIVING ROOM BOOKSHELF.



I OPEN THE DOOR.  
I YELL-

CULTURE-BEARERS!

MORALITY TALE!

IDEOLOGUE!

YOU WAKE ME!

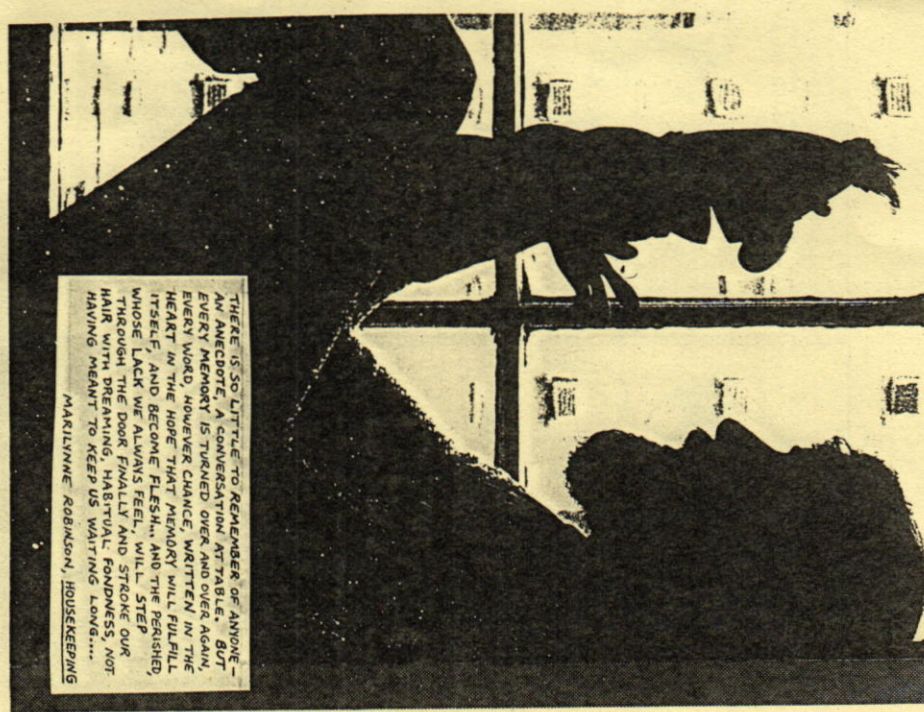
IT SCAMERS AWAY  
(THROUGH A CRACK IN  
THE DOOR).



MY BLADDER'S FULL.

HE NIGHT IS  
PISS-HOUR.  
THE SQUADATION  
OF THEEY ASSASSINATED  
TO THEEY AUDIBLE  
AND THEEY TREE-FILLED  
SYBALIGHT TICKLES  
MY NOSE.

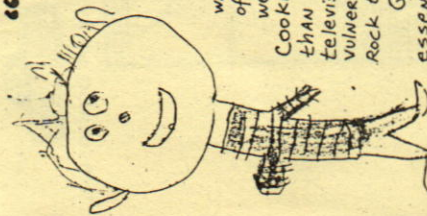
I CLOSE THE DOOR,  
STILL HOLDING THE  
POET IN MY HAND.



THERE IS SO LITTLE TO REMEMBER OF ANYONE -  
AN ANECDOTE, A CONVERSATION AT TABLE. BUT  
EVERY MEMORY IS TURNED OVER AND OVER AGAIN,  
EVERY WORD, HOWEVER CHANCE, WRITTEN IN THE  
HEART IN THE HOPE THAT MEMORY WILL FILL  
ITSELF, AND BECOME FLESH... AND THE PERISHED,  
WHOSE LACK WE ALWAYS FEEL, WILL STEP  
THROUGH THE DOOR FINALLY AND STROKE OUR  
HAIR WITH DREAMING, HABITUAL FONDNESS, NOT  
HAVING MEANT TO KEEP US WAITING LONG....  
MARILYNNE ROBINSON, HOUSEKEEPING



**"Follow your enthusiasm.**  
It's something I've always believed in,  
Find those parts of your life you enjoy most.  
Do what you enjoy doing."



These words from Jim Henson hung on the wall of the Discovery Museum in Sausalito as part of an exhibit of his work. There, behind glass, were Ernie, Bert, the Count, Oscar, Grover, and Cookie Monster - actual puppets, and much smaller than I ever suspected. So large, so animated on television, they now appeared frail, tiny, and vulnerable. I wanted to cradle them in my arms and rock them to sleep gently, carefully, gratefully....

Quite a reaction, don't you think, to what are essentially sculpted pieces of polystyrene?

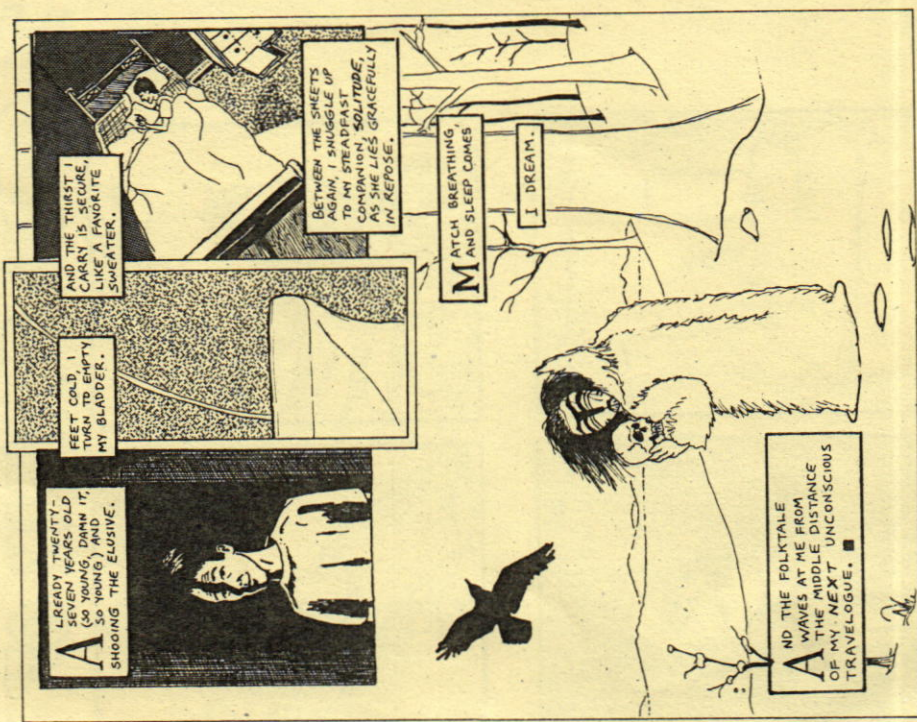
### I grew up with

**Sesame Street** (it was born in 1969, myself in 1967) and **The Muppet Show**. Though I often revile television as a medium, I admire Jim for mastering it, making it his own. But I cherish and bless his name for sharing with us his own world - a world so bizarre, so anarchic, so gentle, and so goddam funny, how could I not love it?

Much of my sense of humor and comic timing (and probably, too, my dreams and goals of making people happy) I owe to this man and the talented folks he gathered around him.

Thank you, Jim Henson.... I miss you, too.

ERNE  
DECEMBER 1971





# I STILL THINK OF YOU, JIM HENSON

BY  
CHRIS AUBRY

ERNIE AND BERT ARE © SOMEBODY ELSE.

